

Alleviations

By

Rose J. E. Grier



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Third Edition

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Mrs. J. C. Grier
Died October 28th 1920

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By

Rose J. E. Grier

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*Affectionately dedicated to the "Old Girls" of the
Bishop Strachan School.*

1876--1899.

Rose J. E. Grier.

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PREFACE

NOTHING IN THIS LITTLE BOOK
WAS WRITTEN FOR PUBLI-
CATION.

THE POEMS ARE PRINTED BY RE-
QUEST, THAT THOSE WHO CARE FOR
THEM MAY HAVE THEM.

IF SOME OF THE VERSES MIGHT
BE AS HELPFUL TO OTHERS AS THEY
HAVE BEEN TO THE WRITER, IT
WOULD BE A GREAT JOY TO HER.

ST. JOHN'S CONVENT
TORONTO

November 11th, 1905.

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Alleviations

*"BE CONTENT TO DO NOTHING AT ALL, IF
IT BE GOD'S WILL."*

Come to me, Lord! all earthly things are fading,
Youth has departed, strength is failing fast;
Mine is no more the dear delight of aiding
Those who are toiling in Thy vineyard—vast,
And all-absorbing in its needs;—I stand
Apart and watch, as through the goodly land
Others are sowing, where I loved to sow,
Others are reaping, where I hoped to reap,
Tending my plants that fair and stately grow,
Guarding the treasures that I fain would keep.
Speak to me, Lord! I weary of inaction,
And there is naught that I can do for Thee;
Send out Thy voice, and by its sweet attraction
Draw from this world my thoughts to heaven
and Thee.

Is it because earth's joys and comforts fail thee
That thou art seeking Me, ungrateful child?
Because the trials of thine age assail thee,
Thou criest thus to Me in accents wild?
Who gave thee youth, and strength and any power
Thou hadst of toiling in this field of Mine?
Whose was the seed that grew to fruit or flower,
And whose the plants thou call'st so proudly thine?
All these were Mine; I did not need thy labour,
That has no value but as proof of love;
Love that unselfishly can see a neighbour
Treading the path where it was wont to move.
Love that goes forth to labour at My sending,
Love that contented, stands when I say "Rest,"
Love that can yield up all, submissive bending,
And in its self-forgetfulness be blest.
Cease then thy murmurs; here is work for thee,
Work that means patience, perseverance, strife;
Work that will bring thee daily nearer Me,
Work that will end but with the end of life.

*"THEN SHALL THE EARS OF THE DEAF BE
UNSTOPPED."*

I cannot hear, dear Lord, as once I heard,
Sweet sound of music or the song of bird;
I cannot hear the gentle voice of friend
In low sweet tones its loving message send;
I cannot hear the murmur of the breeze
That stirs the dancing leaves upon the trees;
I cannot hear the ripple of the stream
That glides before me like a voiceless dream;
The thousand sounds that every rustic hears
Fall all unnoticed on my deafened ears;
And more—I cannot hear, oh! dearest Lord,
The preacher's voice expound Thy Sacred Word.
I cannot hear with this, my outward sense—
But Christ, Lord Christ, our Shield and our
Defence

Speak to my heart in words of comfort, speak
Words that shall in my soul sweet music make;
Closed be my ears, if it be Thy sweet will,
To earthly sounds, but Thou the silence fill
With holy thoughts, with dreams of heaven
and Thee,

With whispers of the glory that shall be;
With the faint fluttering of angel wings,
With echoes of the song the seraph sings,

With loving thoughts on kindly actions bent ;
So shall my days be passed in calm content,
Till health and strength and life itself be spent.
Then grant the rest from sin and earthly pain,
The purifying from each spot and stain,
Till waking in the Presence we adore,
I hear, as I have never heard before.

ADVANCING AGE.

Alone, yet not alone ; near me doth stand
My Guardian Angel, with protecting hand,
To guide and guard me on my downward way,
To closely watch my footsteps lest I stray ;
To check each selfish or repining thought,
And whisper words with consolation fraught ;
To lead my heart and mind from things of earth.
(So dearly cherished, though so little worth) ;
To dwell in heaven where is His own bright home,
Where all Christ's loving children hope to come.

Alone, not lonely, for within me rise
Sweet memories of many a past delight,
Of tender voices—of beloved eyes—
Whose looks and tones once made my life so bright.
Of many a glad permitted usefulness,
Of many a trial, many a sore distress,

Sent by the Hand that only wounds to bless ;
Of many a sin, but of repentance true,
Of strengthened hope and courage ever new ;
And so my heart o'erflows with love and praise
To Him who carried me thro' all the days.

Alone—no, not alone—my Lord is near,
With such companionship, what room for fear,
What room for lonely or regretful thought,
While dwelling on the work that He has wrought
For all mankind—unworthy though we be—
The blessings He has purchased, even for me?
The “many mansions” by His hand prepared,
By those that love Him one day to be shared ;
The things not known to earthly ear or eye,
Not dreamed of in the deepest ecstasy ;
The joy of joys—delight beyond delight—
The glorious vision of the Infinite.
Be near me still, dear Lord, while strength and sight
And hearing fail me, and approaching night
Shadows all darkly my descending way,
Forsake me not, be near me still, I pray ;
Strengthen the feeble heart, keep firm the will,
And in the hour of death be with me still ;
And may this weak and sinful soul of mine
Be precious in Thy sight, O Lord Divine.

OUR TWINS.

Two little heads of hair
 Flaxen and brown ;
Two little foreheads
 With rarely a frown ;
Two pair of bright eyes,
 A brown and a blue,
Seeking to pierce
 This world's mysteries through ;
Two pair of coral lips
 Parting to smile,
Edges of pearly teeth
 Shewing the while ;
Four little arms
 For a ready embrace ;
Four little restless feet,
 Eager to race ;
Two little loving hearts,
 Tender and true ;
Two little minds
 To which all things are new—
Two little treasures
 In trust to us given ;
Two little souls
 To be nurtured for heaven.

LITTLE LILIAS.

Rest, little baby, in thy Saviour's arms,
Though mine be empty ; free from all alarms,
From all temptations, from all chance of sin,
From the world's ceaseless and distracting din.
No disappointment, sorrow, pain or care
Can reach thee in the land where all is fair.
With thy Baptismal robe of innocence
Unsullied, GOD'S own Hand hath drawn thee hence
To share the sweet companionship of those
The Lamb who follow, wheresoe'er He goes.

Not mine to watch my fair, unfolding flower,
And see in it new beauties every hour ;
Not mine to see the growth of every sense,
And mark the quickening of intelligence ;
Not mine to train the little, fearful feet
To stand—to walk ; nor mine with joy to greet
The first few faltering accents ; which to hear
Is sweetest music to a mother's ear ;
Nor mine to teach my darling day by day
To bend the head, and fold the hands and pray.

Yet, Oh, my heart ! be still, nor dare repine ;
His love, His care, are better far than mine ;
He leads my darling in the pastures green,
He shews her things that "Eye hath never seen."

He teaches, guides, enlightens her, that so
The infant soul to perfectness may grow.
He guards my treasure, and a day may come
When I shall see her in her heavenly home.
Dear Lord, be with Thy servant, lest she stray,
Or weak, or weary, falter on the way;
So keep my feet in this Thy day of grace,
That I, too, see one day Thy glorious face.

*TO THE SISTERS OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE
OF CANADA.*

Fair dwellers in a safe and sheltered fold,
Why do ye early rise while others sleep?
Why wander through the dark and gloomy wold
O'er stony wastes, and up the mountain steep,
Round lofty rocks, and through dark marshes toiling,
Your brows with heat, your hands with labour soiling;
Ever so steadfast in the onward track,
Never delaying, never looking back?

Fresh are the pastures that we journey seeking,
Cool are the waters that we long to taste;
Nothing must daunt us, for our Lord is speaking,
Naught may delay us, for He bids us haste;

Nor deem our way all barren, gloomy waste ;
Many a sunbeam lights it, rare and precious,
As in obedience we press calmly on ;
Draughts from the fountains by the way refresh us,
Early, to strengthen us for labour, drawn.
Falls on our ears one sweet voice ever calling,
"I am the Way, My loved ones follow Me" ;
And so we trust He'll keep our feet from falling,
Encompassed by temptations though we be.

Dear are the burdens we for Him are bearing,
With the sweet solace of His boundless love
Round and about us, as the day is wearing,
While we draw nearer to the home above,
Where dwells the Lord, who claims our love and
duty.

No pen can picture that Most Glorious Face ;
No words portray the King in all His Beauty,
Ineffable in glory and in grace.
In his sweet patience He has watched and striven
Early and late with us His wandering sheep,
Entreating that our hearts be wholly given
His to be ever, His to safely keep.
Should we not gratefully and gladly hear Him,
Ardently longing to obey His call ;
Rising up quickly, and in drawing near Him
Offer up thankfully ourselves, our all ?

Stayed not by earthly ties,
Though they are sweet;
Luxuries, comforts,
Lay at His Feet.

Sacrifice Pride, and Ambition and Ease,
Seeking in all things Him only to please;
Thinking no labour hard,
Seeking for no reward,
Save that our service, our prayers and our love
The Master will deign to accept and approve.

Ah! what the joy if faithful to the end
Through much temptation, free from wilful sin,
One day before the Great White Throne we bend,
Pardoned, accepted, called to enter in
Through gates of pearl, into the Safer Fold,
Forever the Good Shepherd to behold.

SISTER BERTHA.

She gave herself to GOD; all her young life
And bright attractiveness; for she was fair
And dowered with many a gracious gift, besides
The sweet mysterious one of magnetism,
Which drew all hearts to her. She could have shone
In worldly circles, but she craved alone
The love of GOD, and so she turned away

From all earth's gay allurements and delights,
And in the spirit of true devotion, made
Her self-surrender absolute.
It was a precious gift, and GOD accepted her,
And we, her Sisters, looked for added strength
From such an eager, earnest life of pure
And high devotion. She had thought
To serve the Master, she so dearly loved
In ministering to His sick and poor,
And in the children, whose young hearts she won
So readily; for her all toil was gladness,
And all worship rest and joy.

But GOD,
Who sees not as we see, had other plans
For her and us. And first He laid her down
Upon a bed of suffering, that her faith
And patience might be proved. And then,
The trial borne with sweet submission,
And the pain with brave endurance,
He exalted her to rest and joy in Paradise.

And have we lost the help
We looked for from that brave young life? Ah, no!
She knows our struggles, needs, perplexities,
And, in her disembodied state, is free
To plead for us more earnestly. And may

Her bright example, like a shining light
Along the path we still must tread, incite
Each one of us to greater holiness,
More fervent prayer, more burning fire of love;
Till, one glad day, the task appointed done,
We, too, may hear the Gracious call, to dwell
Forever with the Lord.

IN MY GARDEN.

By a beautiful rose of crimson dye
I paused, for surely I heard a sigh,
And I bent above her, and whispered "Why?"

"I sigh," the flower sadly said,
"Because my colour, so deeply red,
Tells of the Sacred Blood that was shed;

"And because of the many that come and go
So few are touched by that bitter woe;
So few love Him who loved them so."

I asked a lily, on stem so slender,
Bending and swaying lest storms should rend her,
"What is the thought 'neath that face so tender?"

"One of my kin with the angel went,
Who, with a wondrous message was sent
To a maiden, who heard it with meek content;

“ And I am fain in humility
Like to the maiden-mother to be,
Though far less fair and pure than she.”

“ Little Forget-me-not, blue as the skies,
What is the message I read in your eyes,
Open with infantile, sweet surprise?”

“ Forget not Him Who drew infant breath,
Who came from Heaven to earth beneath
That souls might be saved from eternal death;

“ Forget not Him, Who, throned above,
Still remembers you in His Love;
Him Who will ne’er forgetful prove.”

“ O stately Daffodil, fashioned in gold,
What is the secret your bright leaves hold?
Break the silence, and let it be told.”

“ I speak to the ears of the listening,
Of the gold that was offered to Christ the King,
Of the Love which is gold, which all may bring;

“ Of the crowns of gold that the victors wear,
Of the golden harps that the blessed bear,
Of the streets of gold in the city fair.”

“O, Violet, modestly seeking the shade,
By your sweet perfume alone betrayed,
Preach me a sermon before you fade!”

“Love not display, nor seek for praise,
Be meek and lowly in all your ways,
And fill with unselfish acts your days;

“So be your place in GOD’S garden alone
By the sweet perfume of holiness shewn,
While to the world your abode is unknown.”

Thus, as I walk in my hours of leisure,
Every fair flower that adds to my pleasure
Has words of reproof, or advice, which I treasure;

And I am a child whose wondering sight
Is ever finding, with fresh delight,
New paths that lead to the Infinite.

*“AND THERE SHALL IN NO WISE ENTER
INTO IT ANYTHING THAT DEFILETH.”*

—Rev. XXI: 27.

Once a saint his death awaited,
Weak and weary, sore oppressed;
Yet with holy joy elated,
Peacefully lay down to rest.

Slept, and dreamed of Paradise,
Dreamed he walked a crystal street;
Flowers and shrubs of purest crystal
Glanced and glittered round his feet.

Flashed the trees; their branches crystal,
Crystal-clear their leaves and fruits;
And the sparkling ground discovered,
Not concealed, their crystal roots.

And he gazed, amazement growing,
As 'neath crystal arches strayed
Men and women, all of crystal,
In transparent robes arrayed.

But when he would fain have spoken
To a damsel, who drew near,
Of dismay her face gave token,
And she fled as if in fear.

So each one he would have greeted
With a glance of horror fled,
Till at length the saint, dejected,
Dropped upon his breast his head.

Then he saw he, too, was crystal,
But within his breast a spot
All the brilliancy disfigured
With a dark, repulsive blot.

And in shame and quick confusion,
O'er the place his clasped hands drew ;
All in vain ; the hands were crystal,
And the ugly spot showed through.

Then he waked, and swiftly conscience,
What the dream had meant, confessed ;
For a grudge against another
He had harboured in his breast.

So he sought and gained forgiveness,
And when next he laid him down
'Twas to know a rude awakening,
And to win a martyr's crown.

“MINISTERING SPIRITS.”

One sultry day in summer,
When the air was close and still,
And all who could refreshment sought,
By sea, or stream, or hill;

A little child of the people
Played in the city street,
With never a thought of danger
To check the wand'ring feet.

Farther, and ever farther,
From the shelter of home it strayed,
And in the very midst of the street
The innocent baby played.

All of a sudden a cloud of dust,
And the trample of horses' feet,
As a waggon, whose driver had lost control,
Came rattling down the street.

And no one thought of the baby
Till 'twas too late for aid,
And the heavy wheels had rapidly passed
O'er the spot where the little one played.

Then a policeman lifted
The little form on his arm,
And the blue eyes opened widely
Without a trace of alarm.

“Where is the beautiful lady?”
Said the child, with a smile so rare
That those who saw it felt in their hearts
They had never seen aught so fair.

“I saw her this very minute,
And she lifted the waggon-wheel,
And, although it went right over me,
Not one bit did I feel.”

And the babe was safe and uninjured,
Though across the little breast
Was a mark that by the waggon-wheel
Had clearly been impressed.

Who doubts that the “beautiful lady”
That shielded the child from harm
Was its own bright guardian angel,
Shewn to assuage alarm?

Ah! friends, dear friends! If only
Our hearts were as free from guile,
We, too, might see such visions
As waked that wondrous smile.

For us might the dread be lifted
Of many a crushing weight,
And hardly a mark be left on the soul
By the wheel of the car of fate.

**PHOENIX.*

I shall arise! Though flesh and spirit fail,
Though the world fade before my dark'ning eyes,
Though death doth shake this tabernacle frail,
“I shall arise!”

While near my couch, my dear ones bending low,
In vain would check their bursting tears and sighs,
This thought sustains and strengthens me—“I know
I shall arise.”

Life smiled on me; prosperity was mine,
And I had won a far more precious prize;
Yet in this hope I calmly all resign,
“I shall arise.”

Ashes to ashes; yea, and dust to dust,
And so this perishable body dies;
But Lord, to Thee my soul I do entrust,
“I shall arise.”

**One who was very near death, suddenly opening his eyes, pronounced this word distinctly.*

"HE SHALL GO NO MORE OUT."

—Rev. III: 12.

Oh blest security! no foe can mar,
No change nor chance disturb the perfect peace
Of him, who, faithful soldier in life's war,
Has through His Captain won his full release.

Oh restful thought! "He shall go no more out"
To battle with the countless forms of sin;
To meet attacks of Satan from without,
Or guard 'gainst subtle treachery within.

"Go no more out" amid the tongues of strife,
The scorn of unbelievers, and the shame
Of seeing Christians by a worldly life
Dishonour do to the Most Holy Name.

"He shall go no more out" from streets of gold,
From trees and fruits, and flowers ever fair;
From living waters, sparkling clear and cold,
From forms, and sights, and sounds of beauty rare.

"He shall go no more out" from fellowship
With saints and angels, in that happy place,
Where adoration is on every lip,
And fervent love the language of each face.

“He shall go no more out”: transcendent thought,
In God’s own Presence ever more to dwell;
To see the glory of the Lamb, who wrought
Salvation, such as tongue can never tell.

Oh blest assurance! Worth all present loss,
All weariness, all pain, all struggle now;
Well worth the pressure of the heaviest cross,
To hear at last the gracious “Enter Thou!”

“PASSION OF CHRIST, STRENGTHEN ME.”

“Passion of Christ!” Oh words of awful meaning,
And can I speak them coldly, carelessly,—
Without deep shame, and tears of penitence
For sin which bore such bitter, bitter fruit?
“Passion of Christ!” Oh life-long calm endurance
Of sin, indifference, ingratitude—
Of gifts abused, and disappointed hopes—
And sad foreknowledge of the bitter end!

“Passion of Christ!” In sad Gethsemane
By agony and bloody sweat revealed,
By treacherous kiss and seizure of rough hands,
By ruthless dragging to the judgment hall,

By mockery, by insults, and by blows
Intensified; the Holy Body torn
By cruel, shameful scourging, so that faint
It falls beneath the burden of the tree.

And then the Cross's agony; the racking pain,
The parching thirst, and more, the thirst for souls
That would not own Him, and for those
That, owning Him, still keep back half the heart.
"Passion of Christ" reaching its awful height
In the mysterious cry of dereliction!

"Strengthen me!" Not that I may *bear* my cross
But—that I may not *feel* it—so we cry
Too often; not remembering that He
Refused the draught that would have eased His pain,
And suffered to the end, that we might be
Strong, and endure to follow in His steps.

"Strengthen me!" Dearest Lord when next I pray
This prayer, may it be with a heart
Submissive to Thy will, and apt to learn
All that the Cross can teach—for only thus
Low at Thy feet, the soul may fitly cry
"Passion of Christ, strengthen me!"

A WAKING DREAM.

I had a dream, not long ago,
As sleep o'er my senses was creeping,
And I lay in the misty borderland
That is neither waking nor sleeping.

And in my dreams the Evil One
Came in and sat by my side;
I was conscious of only a wond'ring thought
That I was not terrified.

But scarcely a moment had time to pass
When the air was gently stirred
With the faintest promise of something
That I rather felt than heard.

And then a vision of glistening wings,
And the coming of noiseless feet,
And Angelic Beings, two by two,
My wondering senses greet.

They did not look at the Tempter—
They spoke not, they made no sign,
But he rose at once, and vanished,
Saying, "Here is nothing of mine."

And I saw of his attendants
In number only two,
Mere shadows of something evil,
And quickly lost to view.

But the Angels went onward and upward,
In beautiful bright array ;
Their grave, sweet faces all intent
On the work that before them lay.

I strove in vain to count them,
So great was the shining host,
And while I still was trying
I was in slumber lost.

Where they were going I know not,
Nor what their work, can say ;
But I dare to think they had orders
To pass through that room on the way.

And so, when thoughts of evil,
Or vain imaginings
Trouble the mind that fain would dwell
On High and Holy Things

To remember that they who are with us,
So strong, so calm, so bright,
Are more than those against us,
Should put such thoughts to flight.

Lord of the Angels, make me
So pure that, by Thy grace,
I, like those Blessed Beings,
May one day see Thy Face.

THE PAPER MILL.

Filthy rags! impure, unwholesome,
Apt to spread infection dire,
Through the germs that lurk within them,
Fit for nothing but the fire.

Why are scores of fingers busy
With the foul, unsightly mass,
Separating, cutting, bringing
Order from confusion crass?

Now machinery in motion
Cleanses, tears to fragments small,
Heat of steam, and teeth of iron
Crushing, purifying all.

Once again the cleansing process
By the scalding, searching steam,
And the filthy rags that entered
Issue a translucent stream.

Fixed and deftly shaped and moulded,
Now 'tis paper, smooth and fair,
Destined on its spotless surface
GOD'S own Holy Word to bear.

So we learn a needed lesson—
None created to despise,
Whom we may regard as worthless
GOD beholds with other eyes.

Sets machinery in motion,
Heat of suffering, teeth of pain,
All the good within them latent
Bringing to the light again.

Cleansed through penitence and pardon,
Patiently they suffer loss,
Joyfully enduring all things
By the virtue of the Cross.

Till, with hearts and lives transmuted,
'Tis their mission to proclaim
All the love of Him who bought them,
All the Glory of His Name.

"IF A MAN DIE, SHALL HE LIVE AGAIN?"

Ask, for answer yonder oak;
Through the enclosing shell it broke,
Pierced the earth that o'er it lay,
Striving upwards towards the day.
Now a noble, spreading tree,
Leaves and branches fair to see.
Yet all this beauty lay folded up
In a tiny germ in the acorn cup!

Ask that gaily-colored thing
Flitting by on gauzy wing;
Once a worm on earth it crept,
Then in darksome cell it slept;
Now a thing of beauty rare,
Floats and flies in upper air;
And all this colour and life has risen
From seeming death, in a narrow prison.

Ask the daisies, white and pure,
Their bright eyes make answer sure;
Ask the violets, and draw nigh,
Fragrance is their sweet reply;
Ask yon field of waving grain,
None the mystery can explain,
But all declare with consenting breath
"This fulness of life is our's through death."

And Man—GOD'S noblest work on earth,
Can he doubt that through death he gains
 new birth
Into a life beyond our ken,
Where those that were parted meet again,
Where all that is dark and mysterious here
Shall be, in the light of Eternity, clear;
Where Death, that we dread, itself shall die,
Being swallowed up in victory?

"NOT WITH EYE SERVICE."

In the depths of some tropical forests
 Remote from human view,
The ground is aglow with flowers
 Of beautiful shape and hue.

And the trees are decked with orchids
 And beautiful hanging things,
And flashes of brilliant colour,
 Are made by restless wings.

No mortal eye may see them,
 But the angels look with delight,
And the Author of all this beauty,
 Is pleased by the sight.

High in the roofs of cathedrals,
For the eye of GOD alone,
Are beautiful leaves and flowers
Carved in the hard grey stone.

Not in pride and ambition
Were these exquisite fancies wrought.
Only GOD and His glory
Were in the designer's thought.

Down in the bed of the ocean,
Where the winds and waves are asleep,
The guardians of all things precious
A store-house of treasure keep.

Wonderful hidden treasure,
So small that in the hand,
A million or two would resemble
Just so many grains of sand.

But the microscope reveals them
Of delicate colour and form,
The tiny building and dwelling
Of an infinitesimal worm.

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Of the innermost shrine of your consciousness,
What is the history?
Are there any beautiful flowers
For the eye of GOD to see?

Fairest blossom of Purity,
Spotless kept from youth,
Brilliant, fragrant flowers
Of Love, and joy and Truth?

Are there leaves of good resolutions,
Fruits of victories won
By sternest self-denial,
Carved in your heart of stone?

Down in the depth of your being,
Are the passions laid to rest,
And is there anything building
Fit for the Master's quest?

Look to your life and its purpose,
Your work, and its motives scan;
Are you striving for GOD'S approval
And not for the praise of man?

Al! marvels of form and colour
But faintest shadows are
Of the unimagined beauty
In which He dwells afar.

Yet He is ever looking
Down from His Throne on high,
And of all our poor endeavours
Not one escapes His eye.

One day, perhaps, will be opened
To us, the purpose and plan
Of the Great Creator of all things,
For worm, and flower, and man!

CHILDREN'S HYMN.

GOD our Father, high in heaven,
Listen to our evening prayer,
We would fain, with sins forgiven,
Rest beneath Thy loving care.

Countless blessings have been ours,
Through the day that's over now;
Air and sunshine, food and raiment,
All we have to Thee we owe.

Lord, we thank Thee for each blessing,
And we love Thee for Thy love,
May each one the love professing
By a glad obedience prove.

Now that night is closing o'er us
May no evil thing draw nigh,
But, the holy angels' chorus
Be our slumbers' lullaby.

May our dreams be of the Saviour,
May He sanctify our rest,
And our waking hours' behaviour
Be with His sweet Presence blest.

GOD the Father, our Creator,
Dear Redeemer, GOD the Son,
Unto both with GOD the Spirit
Everlasting praise be done.

LENTEN HYMN.

FOR SCHOOLS

“Once more the solemn season calls”

Our slothful souls to move
To penitence, to earnest prayer,
And acts of Christian love.

We own, O Lord! our sinfulness,
Our poor imperfect prayers,
Our wandering thoughts, the love of self
The guise of good that wears.

The many idle words we speak,
The little love of Thee,
The wayward spirit that would fain
From all restraint be free.

And yet, dear Lord, within our hearts
There surely is some love;
We long to please Thee by our lives
And faithful children prove.

For this we need Thy promised help,
And so we come to Thee
For strength to make our new resolves
With deep reality.

For grace to keep them day by day,
To live as in Thy sight,
Remembering we are called to walk
As children of the light.

That He who gave His life for us
May claim us as His own,
When with that only hope, we stand
Before the great White Throne.

N. B.—The first line is borrowed, by request, from Hymn 84, A. and M.

“TAKE UP THY CROSS.”

“Take up thy Cross,” the children sing,
The words are noble, the music sweet,
And the fresh young voices clearly ring,
And they almost long a cross to meet.

For to carry it would be gladness,
Dreams the confidence of youth,
With no thought that a cross means sadness,
That the cross is a cross in truth.

Their sheltered lives have known no care,
And little pain or sorrow;
Their sleep has been sweet, and their dreams
all fair,
Of a bright and glad to-morrow.

"Take up thy cross," but never a thought
That sorrow, or pain or shame,
Is the form in which a cross must be wrought
To be worthy of the name.

Ah! sooner or later, children dear,
This knowledge will come to you all,
But there is a stronghold when trouble is near,
A safeguard in fear of fall.

The cross will be hard to flesh and blood,
You may think that you cannot bear it;
But He who was nailed to a cross of wood
Will stoop from heaven to share it.

Then sing, sing on, in your simple faith,
Your instinct is verily true;
No cross is too hard to be borne with Him
Who died on the cross for you.

LILIES OF THE VALLEY.

Lilies of the valley! By express,
A box filled with the dainty, fragrant flowers,
So pure, so simple in their loveliness,
Such fairy offspring of this world of ours.

Gentle hands did water, nurse and tend them,
Growing in some secluded garden spot;
A girlish figure stooped to pluck and send them,
With the sweet message, "Thou art not forgot."

Grateful to sight and sense their perfume sweet,
'Their tender beauty, and their words of love,
Nor can I dream of any flower more meet
On such an errand messenger to prove.

No flower so sweet—yet sweeter far to me
'Than e'en these lilies is the gentle thought
That in the sender's breast rose lovingly,
And in this graceful form expression sought.

O Love, thou "present for a mighty king!"
O Love, more precious than the finest gold!
O Love, whom artists paint, and poets sing,
And yet by neither is thy value told!

Be kind to the fair maid of whom I write,
Dwell in her heart, and all her actions move,
And draw her ever towards the Infinite,
The only Source and End of all true love.

TO MY PIANO.

Oh! beautiful cold keys, your pleasant faces
Smile a bright welcome! Fain these hands of mine
Would wake to life some of the hidden graces
That sleeping lie within their ivory shrine.

Oh! glistening strings that vibrate to the touch!
Your clear, sweet voices reach my inmost heart,
And make me fear I love you over-much,
Since of myself ye almost seem a part.

Here, when oppressed with care the heart is saddened,
It knows that happiness and comfort lie,
And if it still refuses to be gladdened
It must be soothed by your sweet sympathy.

Ye keep my secrets, too, O prudent friends!
I, fearless, trust you with my thoughts and dreams;
And many a wild imagination blends
With the clear current of your silvery streams.

Oh! when for us all earthly sights and sounds
Shall into silence and to darkness wane,
Shall not our senses, freed from mortal bounds,
Know the full sweetness of the angelic strain!

Shall not each glorified and faultless voice
Join in rich chords of perfect harmony,
And in those nobler melodies rejoice
For which, while here, we only grope and sigh.

"HE LEADETH ME."

I have erred and strayed,
But one has followed with untiring feet,
And eager longing, and with Patience sweet
Has near me stayed.

I would not turn
To see who followed, though my aching heart,
Refusing still to choose the better part,
Did in me burn.

I would not hear
The sweet voice ever calling, calling,
"Come unto Me, I'll keep thy feet from falling,
Thy soul from fear."

I fell, and was afraid
That none was near me in the wilderness
To listen to the tale of my distress,
Or give me aid.

And then a voice
Breathed words of consolation in my ear
"Trust but to Me and thou hast naught to fear,
Make Me thy choice."

What could I say
To words so tender, in a voice so sweet?
I longed to throw myself before His feet,
And there to stay.

With many a tear
My sins and all my weakness, I confessed,
And soon with His forgiveness I was blessed
And freed from fear.

Now *He* doth lead;
And I, I follow whereso'er He goes,
And all my inmost thoughts to Him disclose,
And every need.

A deep content
Is in my heart, whene'er the end may be,
Sooner or later, it is naught to me,
So that His blessed will be wrought in me
Till life be spent.

"UNDER HIS SHADOW."

Under His shadow, in weariness,
Resting with great relief,
I thought of "the rest that remaineth"
And the hours of toil seemed brief.

Under His shadow, in poverty,
Resting, I softly said:
"My lord, the King of Angels,
Had not where to lay His head."

Under His shadow, in sorrow,
I rested with steadfast faith,
For "His soul was exceeding sorrowful,
Even unto death."

Under His shadow, in loneliness
Rested, in calm content,
For I fain would follow my Master,
And this is the way He went.

Under His shadow, in suffering,
 Patiently laid me down;
For what of the cruel scourging,
 What of the thorny crown?

Under His shadow, temptation
 Loses its power to sting;
For the hosts of hell are marshalled
 In vain against our King.

Under His shadow, deserted,
 I rested an aching head,
And a voice within me whispered:
 "They all forsook Him and fled."

Under His shadow, in penitence,
 What is this whisper low?
"Though your sins be like scarlet,
 They shall be white as snow."

Under His shadow, in weakness
 I rested, nor made complaint;
For a heavy Cross He carried,
 When bruised, and sore and faint.

Into the Valley of Shadows,
I shall not fear to fare;
For my Saviour knows its darkness,
And He will meet me there.

Oh, the joy of that meeting!
The bright Eternal Day,
When in the light of His Presence
Shadows shall flee away.

A STUDY IN COLOUR.

Driving through the country, in these August days,
Sun that might be sultry, veiled in soft gray haze.

Heat that might be trying, tempered by a breeze,
Laden with the music of a thousand trees.

Fragrant with the breathing of a million flowers;
Oh! 'tis good to live in this Canada of ours!

Riot in the colour round about you spread,
Grasses green and yellow, brown and gray and red.

Daisies by the road-side, bright-eyed, pure and white,
Golden-rod, in glory dazzling to the sight.

Fields of purple clover, of buckwheat white as snow,
Here and there an elm or maple lifts his brow.

Golden grain of harvest, fringe of evergreen,
Light and shade and beauty everywhere are seen.

Miles of well-kept orchards stretch before the eye,
Giving gracious promise of a rich supply.

On the hill-side grazing, cattle, brown and red,
Knee-deep in the plenty of their daily bread.

Homesteads where the farmer labours not in vain,
Fields and garden showing peace and plenty reign.

Surely we, her children, choicest blessings share,
Oh! 'tis good to live in Canada, the fair!

MY LOVER.

I have a lover, straight and tall,
With a forehead smooth and fair;
With a depth of thought in his hazel eyes,
With wavy nut-brown hair.

My lover is brave and bright and strong,
Yet always gentle and kind,
And a sunnier face, or a sweeter voice,
You must travel far to find.

My lover's soul is as white and pure
As a fair unwritten page,
And with Satan and sin 'tis his firm intent
A steadfast war to wage.

My lover is ever loyal and true,
Yet not to me are given
His deepest thoughts or his highest hopes,
They are for GOD and heaven.

I would not give my lover's love
For wealth of silver or gold;
And would you like to know his age?
My lover is eight years old!

A TRANSFORMATION.

I drew up my blind on an exquisite world,
Had I wakened in fairy-land?
Is this delicate clothing of branch and twig
The work of an elfin hand?

Down the long avenue gazing, the eyes
Meet a bewildering sight—
Trees and fences and telegraph lines
Outlined in spotless white.

Whence is this magic, this joy and delight,
This wonderful sweet surprise?
What is become of the work-a-day world
On which I closed my eyes?

This is the secret: the night was wrapped
In a veil of thick soft mist,
And the Frost-king paused on his fanciful way,
And the vapour lightly kissed,

Wak'ning the beauty that slept in the mist,
Wak'ning her smiling and fair,
Bidding her charm for a season our hearts
To forgetting that trees are bare.

Think of it, picture the gracious task,
You in the heyday of youth,
You with your beauty, your talents, your
strength,—
Here is a lesson in Truth.

There are brains that are weary, and brows that
are sad,
And lives where anxieties reign;
Give of your brightness to win their hearts
From dwelling on sorrow and pain.

There is not a joy on this earth of ours
So pure as the joy of giving,
And only the life that forgets itself
Is wholly worth the living.

CHRISTMAS CAROL.

Chime sweet bells, it is Christmas Morn,
Sing glad hearts, the Saviour is born ;
Welcome Him, earth and sky and sea,
Welcome Him, bird and flower and tree ;
Welcome Him, crystals of ice and snow,
Shining fair, in the moonlight glow,
Welcome Him, beasts in your lowly shed,
Else hath He nowhere to lay His head ;
He who from glories of throne and crown,
To a sinful world came graciously down.
Welcome, O shepherds, your flocks who keep,
Him who is coming to save His sheep,
Welcome, O kings, with your gifts of gold,
Him whose gift is of love untold ;
Welcome Him, Saints, who is faithful and true ;
Welcome Him, sinners, He longs for you.
Now that your King is coming once more,
In lowly guise, as He did before,
Welcome Him, all, from greatest to least,
Meet Him to-day, in His Own Great Feast.

"EYE HATH NOT SEEN NOR EAR HEARD."

"Eye hath not seen!" and yet how very fair
GOD'S bountiful creation, grasses rare,
Clothing the earth with beauty, lofty trees,
Raising their heads towards heaven, while round
 their knees
Cluster rich ferns, and many coloured flowers
Lift, as we pass, their glad, bright eyes to ours.

"Eye hath not seen!" and yet the azure sky,
The ever-changing clouds that charm the eye;
Sunshine and shadow, mist and summer rain,
And after the "clear shining" once again.
The far horizon beckoning to the eye,
The smiling slopes and plains that nearer lie,
The earth aglow with the moon's silver light,
The sky star-spangled on a summer night,
The sparkling brook, the river full and free,
The glorious ocean, in its majesty;
Nowhere the eye can look, and fail to prove
Some token of Almighty Power and Love.

"Ear hath not heard;" and yet the harmony
That sound awakes in earth and sea and sky!
Sweet songs of birds, the many-voiced wind,
Ocean's deep bass, with lighter tones combined;

Music of strings and pipes and ivory keys,
All the musician's wondrous power to please;
Voices of merry children at their play,
Of happy maidens singing on their way;
All these and more, the listening heart have stirred,
These and far more—and yet "Ear hath not
heard!"

"Neither hath entered into heart of man;"
O heart of mine, conceive it if you can!
Where gates of pearl, and streets of shining gold
An endless vista to the eye unfold,
Where trees and fruits and flowers ever new
And marvellous in beauty meet the view,
Where light is glorious ever as at noon,
And yet "the city hath not sun or moon."

There in their orders saints and angels stand
To worship or fulfil their Lord's command,
There angels strike their harps, the blessed sing,
And the high heavens with alleluias ring;
There above cherubim and seraphim
One sits, whose Face no painter's art may limn,
Waiting in all His glory and His grace
To give the vision of that Perfect Face,
For all reward to those who strong in faith
And love have triumphed over sin and death.

MY RING.

O little circle of gold!

What beautiful things I behold,
As I gaze with eyes through time grown dim
On the undimmed sheen of your golden rim,
Once on my finger a moment placed,
Quickly withdrawn with mysterious haste,
Hidden away with reverent care
Such as we give to a treasure rare.
Little we dreamed on that winter night
Filled with a mystical, strange delight,
Little we thought that the magic thing
Never should be a wedding ring,
That when on my finger again it shone
The light from my life would all be gone.

O little circle of gold!

You are slighter now than of old,
For fifty years have left their mark,
They have whitened the hair that once was dark,
They have weighted the step that once was light,
They have dulled the hearing and dimmed the
sight,
They have stolen the roundness from cheek and
limb,

And some of the gold from your narrowed rim.
But O little circle of gold!
You are just as pure as of old.
You are just as real, just as true,
As when I was youthful and you were new,
And if twice told fifty years were fled,
You would still be gold, though worn to a thread.

And O little circle of gold!
What a lesson for all you hold;
Though the hair whiten and though the cheek pale,
Though the frame waste, and activities fail,
May truth and endurance the failure refine,
And the pure gold of love never yield to decline.

A Tribute

THOSE among the vast host of "Old Girls" of the Bishop Strachan School who have been privileged with an early glimpse at "Alleviations," the booklet of exquisite verse, by Rose J. E. Grier, softly turn the pages with an awed reverence.

As words from a Principal, who for a quarter of a century traced the indelible impress of a saintly life, a gracious and kindly courtesy, and a heaven-born forbearance upon the countless minds who came beneath her wise authority, the little poems will be sacred.

They were not written for publication. Only the thought that some other one—some weary, or some troubled one—might find a help, has led to their appearing; a selfless giving forth which is but a symbol of a life not only crowned at its close with a humble, Christlike piety, but of a life whose days were filled with piety. And now, though happy "vineyard toiling" is over, though "strength is failing fast," hear her gently say:

"Alone, not lonely, for within me rise
Sweet memories of many a past delight,
Of tender voices—of beloved eyes—
Whose looks and tones once made my life so bright.
Of many a glad permitted usefulness,
Of many a trial, many a sore distress,
Sent by the Hand that only wounds to bless;
Of many a sin, but of repentance true,
Of strengthened hope and courage ever new;
And so my heart o'erflows with love and praise
To Him who carried me thro' all the days."

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